



#### ISSUE

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) supports sufficient and sustained funding through the reauthorization of federal aviation programs, with particular emphasis on incorporating regional aviation systems planning (RASPs).

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

##### PARTNERSHIPS

- Support the federal government partnership with local governments and regions to resolve critical aviation transportation capacity issues.
- Engage directly with local elected officials, who understand the local needs, opportunities, and obligations of all aviation users through their “on-the-ground” perspective.
- Create a more robust partnership between FAA and local governments through their Metropolitan Planning Organizations to more fully deploy the use of RASPs.

##### FUNDING

- Authorize and expand funding for Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) airport capital development programs.
- Prioritize funding for airport projects that are consistent with RASPs.
- Maintain and strengthen the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), and allow airports to build the capacity to meet the demands of future growth, including:
  - authorizing and providing adequate funding for the AIP program;
  - obligating funds annually from the aviation trust fund without delay;
  - removing the aviation trust fund from the federal unified budget; and,
  - using the aviation trust fund for dedicated purposes only.
- Increase funding for the Essential Air Service (EAS) program and continue federal subsidies, including the Small Community Air Service Development Program, to ensure that service is not discontinued in small communities.
- Provide sufficient new funding to ensure adequate security at both commercial and general aviation airports which does not reduce funding from other essential programs such as the AIP and EAS Programs. Financial burdens related to security requirements should not be imposed on local government and regional entities.

##### PROGRAM

- Ensure regional authority in aviation decision-making, including:
  - streamlining the federal role in instances where local governments have the capacity to operate and maintain airport facilities;
  - recognizing local control of land use decisions pertaining to air and noise pollution control; and,
  - increasing authority to work in conjunction with airport operators to impose and enforce rates and charges, as well as make decisions on revenue spending for airport development, capital financing and operations.

#### BACKGROUND

Aviation programs enhance mobility and support our country’s regional transportation needs, serving as a catalyst for the efficient movement of goods, services and people, while supporting local and regional economies. Regional, multi-jurisdictional entities and local governments have the capacity to plan and coordinate aviation activities with other land use and transportation factors. Aviation policy should capitalize on this capacity to better integrate aviation needs with other modes of transportation. The following are three important FAA programs:

- AIP provides grant funding to public agencies for the planning and development of public-use airports. Projects eligible for funding include runways, terminals and other enhancements designed to improve airport safety, capacity, security and environmental impacts.
- EAS guarantees small communities are served by certified air carriers and maintain a minimal level of service. Funding provides commuter airlines to serve approx. 140 rural communities that otherwise would not receive air service.
- Small Community Air Service Development Program, a pilot program created under AIR-21 and renewed under Vision 100, provides assistance to enhance air service to small communities.